

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7465

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 12202

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCU), NI

SUBJECT: FESTAC DEVELOPMENTS: VIEWS ON CONTINGENCY PLANS

REF: (A) LAGOS 12077-C; (B) STATE 259443-C; (C) STATE 248228-C

1. MEETINGS WHICH AMBASSADOR AND KEY STAFF HELD ON OCTOBER 23 WITH NAZ REPRESENTATIVES AND FESTAC PRESIDENT FINGESI RESPECTIVELY LEAD POST TO FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS;

(A) NAZ COMMITTEE FIRMLY BELIEVES PROSPECT THAT IT MIGHT RESIGN IF TRANSPORTATION IS NOT ASSURED FOR ALL 1200 DESIGNATED AMERICAN FESTAC PARTICIPANTS EVENTUALLY WILL BRING USG AND/OR FMG TO PROVIDE NECESSARY FUNDING OF APPROXIMATELY \$700,000. BELIEF BASED ON ESTIMATE THAT RESIGNATION WOULD MEAN COLLAPSE OF AMERICAN PARTICIPATION, WITH RESULTANT DAMAGE TO FESTAC AND US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS, POSSIBLY CAUSING UNFORTUNATE INT-4,-) 7 09)858:-) REPERCUSSIONS. DISCUSSIONS WITH DONALDSON AND COLLEAGUES ON LIKELIHOOD THAT NAZ CAN RAISE SUBSTANTIAL FUNDS WERE NOT ENCOURAGING. POST BELIEVES POSSIBILITY OF NAZ RESIGNATION IS SERIOUS BUT THAT NAZ WILL HOLD ON UNTIL LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT IN THE HOPE OF SECURING FULL U.S. FINANCING.

(B) FINGESI AND FMG, WHILE HIGHLY DESIROUS OF SOME AMERICAN PARTICIPATION, DO NOT INTEND TO SUPPLY FUNDING UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. FMG CONTRIBUTION IS LIMITED TO ASSURING HOUSING, MEALS, INTERNAL TRANSPORTATION AND IN-COUNTRY INSURANCE OF ALL PARTICIPANTS AND ART WORKS. THEY ARE DETERMINED TO MEET COMMITMENT OF BRINGING OFF FESTAC AS SCHEDULED BUT POLITICAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL PRIORITY GIVEN IT IS CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN UNDER PREVIOUS REGIME. FINGESI WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH MINIMUM OF SOME 200-300 "QUALITY"

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AMERICANS TO PARTICIPATE IN MAJOR ACTIVITY SECOTORS OF FESTAC.

FINGESI IS ANNOYED WITH DONALDSON'S "IMPLIED THREAT" OF RESIGNATION AND HIS REFUSAL TO PROVIDE REALISTIC OPTIONS ON SIZE OF AMERICAN PARTICIPATION. WITHOUT SUCH OPTIONS FINGESI SAID IFC COULD NOT COMPLETE FINAL SCHEDULING OF EVENTS AND PLAN HOUSING AND OTHER SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS.

2. IN ABOVE MEETINGS, THE AMBASSADOR ODXERED NO HOPE THAT USG COULD PROVIDE MORE THAN THE \$150,000 ALREADY SUPPLIED TO NAZ. BASED ON ITS ASSESSMENT, THE POST RECOMMENDS THAT DONALDSON BE GIVEN NO INDICATION YET OF THE POSSIBLE AVAILABILITY OF UP TO \$115,000 IN ADDITIONAL FUNDING. POST BELIEVES SUCH KNOWLEDGE LIKELY TO RESULT IN CONSUMPTION OF THESE FUNDS IN FURTHER "ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES" EITHER DIRECTLY OR AS DOWN PAYMENT TO OBTAIN CHARTER FLIGHTS FOR 1200 PARTICIPANTS WITHOUT ANY ASSURANCE HOW FULL COST COULD BE COVERED. BELIEVE POINT TO BE STRESSED IS URGENT NECESSITY FOR NAZ TO DEVELOP OPTIONS ON CONFIGURATION OF AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IF FUNDING CAN BE FOUND FOR 100, FOR 250 OR FOR 500 PARTICIPANTS.

3. POST HAS CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED ONE OPTION AS UNWARRANTED -- THAT OF PROVIDING U.S. MILITARY AIR TRANSPORT FOR THE 1200-PERSON NAZ GROUP IN THREE FLIGHTS OVER AND BACK DURING JANUARY 15 - FEBRUARY 15 PERIOD. POST DOES NOT ADVOCATE THIS OPTION AS THERE IS NO PRESENT INDICATION THAT REDUCED AMERICAN FESTAC PARTICIPATION WOULD HARM U.S.-NIGERIAN RELATIONS TO A DEGREE WHICH WOULD WARRANT THE ALLOCATION OF SUCH RESOURCES.

4. IF NAZ COMMITTEE CONTINUES PURSUE ITS STRATEGY AND NO CORNUCOPIA MATERIALIZES, POST SEES ONLY ONE WAY TO CUT GORDIAN KNOW WITH MINIMAL DAMAGE TO ALL CONCERNED: IN LATE NOVEMBER, THE AMBASSADOR COULD INFORM FINGESI THAT USG HAS FOUND FUNDS TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION FOR APPROXIMATELY 250 AMERICAN PARTICIPANTS, BUT THAT AS NAZ CONTINUES TO INSIST ON 1,200 THESE FUNDS ARE INSUFFICIENT AND COULD NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE ON THAT BASIS. AMBASSADOR WOULD THEN URGE FINGESI TO PERSUADE NAZ TO DRAW UP LIST OF 250 PARTICIPANTS TO BE FINANCED  
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BY USG FUNDS. IF NAZ UNWILLING TO DO SO AND INSTEAD RESIGNS, USG MIGHT ITSELF CHARTER PLANE AND MAKE UP REPRESENTATIVE GROUP SO AS TO ASSURE SOME APPROPRIATE US PARTICIPATION.

5. EMBASSY REQUESTS SUMMARY OF NEXT RICHARDSON-DONALDSON MEETING AND DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS ON THIS MESSAGE. SUMMARY OF OCTOBER 23 MEETINGS SUBJECT SEPTTEL.

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